

THE VILLAGE BLUEBIRD

Volume 9, Issue 5

May 2012



Spring Greetings!

Dear Village School Families,

Spring has sprung at VES and we are so excited about all the wonderful things spring brings! The season will continue to be busy with art, music and cultural events, service projects and academic celebrations showcasing students' talents and learning. Please review the calendar of events at the right and review this issue for details about the state assessment, student placement information, moving up and orientation plans, exciting PTA sponsored events and more!

Thank you for your continued support of Village School and please note the various ways you can get involved during this eventful season.

Ms. Lacy

The movie *Earth* was the Kids Vote winner! Classes will view the movie on May 11th and engage in related literacy activities. Thank you for your support!

2012-2013 PLACEMENT PROCESS

As the end of the year approaches, plans for classroom placements are being made. Mr. Hadinger and I will work closely with teachers, supervisors, and guidance counselors to place current 3rd graders into 4th grade. OHES principal, Mrs. Goldberg will place current 2nd graders into 3rd grade with our assistance. We will place all 4th graders into 5th grade classes with assistance from Lower Middle School principal, Mr. Mike Richards. All students will be placed in heterogeneous classes with the best possible teacher match, a positive group of classmates, and a few familiar students from previous classes. Any specific academic needs will be taken into consideration first. Students are identified for special instructional models during the summer using multiple classroom assessment measures administered during the course of the school year.

Parents of current 3rd and 4th graders are welcome to share any vital information with me that the school does not already have. This information must be in writing and may not include requests for specific teachers. Please note that pertinent information shared with me in previous years must be resubmitted. Letters or emails must be received by **June 15, 2012**.

Please trust us to make the best placement possible for all children. It is important to us that students have successful academic and developmentally appropriate experiences in school with talented and caring teachers. Final placement information will be sent home in August.

Ms. Lacy

May's Pillar of Character is Leadership

DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 7-11: NJASK Testing, National Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 11: Kids Vote Movie, *Earth*
- May 14: Teacher for the Day Drawing
- May 14-18: NJ ASK Make Ups
- May 16: PTA Mtg, OHES 10am
- May 21 & 23: 3rd Grade Concerts & Art Shows
- May 22: Mad Science Assembly; BOE Mtg, 7:30pm UMS
- May 23: 3rd Grade Orientation Visit for 2nd graders
- **May 25-30: Memorial Day Break and School Closing due to unused snow days**
- May 31: PTA Staff Appreciation Luncheon
- June 1-12: MAP Testing
- June 4: Band 1 & Chorus Concert, MHS, 7pm
- June 5: Band 2 & Orchestra Concert, MHS, 7pm
- June 12: BOE Mtg 7:30. UMS
- June 13: 3rd Grade Fun Day
- June 14: 4th Grade Fun Day, 3rd Grade Parent Instrument Info Meeting 6:30-9 VES Cafeteria
- June 18 & 19: Mary Jacobs Library Assembly
- **June 20: Last Day of School - early dismissal**



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REDUCING ANXIETY

~Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Fornal & Miss Laera

Below you will find strategies for helping your child respond to stressful situations. With the NJ ASK underway and the MAP assessments scheduled in June, it is natural for some children and parents to feel a touch of anxiety. Teachers have been modeling and reminding students of the following strategies in preparation for testing but these could be applied at home and in a variety of situations:

1. Remain Calm – Children can feel the anxiety adults are experiencing. Minimizing their stress levels is very important. Teachers have ensured that children know what to expect so they can take the test under the most comfortable conditions as possible.
2. Be a model of emotional regulation - Adults can help children work through the worry they may be experiencing. If you know your child is experiencing anxiety, practice breathing exercises together: *Breathe air in your nose for a count of three (your stomach extends), and out your mouth for a count of three (your stomach retracts)* This is a great strategy to teach your child that he or she can employ during the test.
3. Exercise! This can help increase alertness and sharpen the mind.
4. Get a good night's sleep – It is hard to function when you are overtired. Sleep reenergizes the body and helps us think clearly.
5. Eat a nutritious breakfast - Fresh fruits and vegetables can help reduce stress. Avoid cereals with artificial sweeteners. Other stressful foods can include carbonated soft drinks, chocolate, eggs, fried foods, junk foods, pork, red meat, sugar, white flour products, chips and similar snack foods.
6. Expect some anxiety -It is natural to experience some nervous feelings. The key is to be able to work through them and to use them to help you get through the test.
7. Keep a positive attitude - Help your child understand that the only thing that is important is that he/she try his/her best. It is ok not to know everything!

TESTING UPDATE: 2012 NJASK AND MAP ~ MR. HADINGER

NJ ASK testing is taking place this week, May 7th-11th and makeup testing will take place May 14th-18th. NJASK provides helpful information about your child's progress toward achieving standards in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and in fourth grade only—Science. MAP testing will take place on two different days between June 1st and June 12th. The MAP assessment is designed to measure your child's growth and progress in Reading and Mathematics from year to year. It will also be used to create individual learning paths in Odyssey which will be accessible during the summer months. A testing schedule will be provided in advance. As always, no preparation is required or suggested.

Montgomery students usually do well on standardized assessments as our curriculum is standards-based. Our students acquire the skills and knowledge tested by the state-mandated New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment as part of their everyday school learning experiences. We also teach our students the format of the assessments. Because of this, parents do not need to do anything special to prepare children. Students should get a good night's sleep and have a healthy breakfast each morning before coming to school. NJASK assessment results will be forwarded to parents as soon as the State makes them available in the early Fall. MAP Assessment results will be sent home on the last day of school.

Please feel free to contact Erin Peacock, Director of Assessment and Testing with any questions. 609-466-7600. Thank you in advance for your continued support of Village School.



Third Grade Concerts and Art Show at VES!

Monday, May 21, 2012 ~ Lunch 1 Classes

Wednesday, May 23, 2012 ~ Lunch 2 Classes

Art Show 5:30-8:00 pm

Musical Concert 7:00 p.m.



During the school year, third grade students have been busy drawing, painting, printing and creating their own masterpieces. On Monday May 21st and Wednesday May 23rd, beginning at 5:30 P.M., please come see your child's favorite piece of artwork on display at VES before or after the music performance.

The 3rd Graders are preparing for their concert, entitled "Songs of the Seasons." Each class will learn and perform 3 songs from their "season" followed by all of the classes singing the premier of "Blazer the Blue Bird," our new school song, as well as the "Blazer Remix!" They can hardly wait for you to hear them.

Mrs. O'Connor and Dr. Bell

Band and Orchestra information for 3rd Grade Parents

4th grade students at VES have the opportunity to participate in band or orchestra. At the end of this school year, the current 3rd grade students will have the opportunity to select instruments that they might want to play for next year. In order to help you to make an informed decision, during the month of June, students will have the opportunity to try the instruments to see which instruments are the best fit for them. Detailed information about next year's instrumental program will be sent home with students in late May. A parent information session is scheduled for June 14th from 6:30-9:00p.m.

Fourth Grade Concerts at MHS!



Monday, June 4, 2012, 7:00 p.m. ~ Band #1 and Chorus
Tuesday, June 5, 2012, 7:00 p.m. ~ Band #2 and Orchestra

VES Chorus Highlights:

The 4th Grade classes are diving into musical styles, including, opera, jazz, classical, rock, etc. Ask them to tell you about Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Wynton Marsalis! The 4th Grade Spring Chorus will be performing Broadway show tunes on June 4th. It should be a fun concert and we look forward to seeing you there. Feel free to contact me at lbell@mtsd.us if you have any questions about the concerts or music classes.

Sincerely, Dr. Bell

VES Orchestra Information and Schedule of Events:

VES Orchestra students have been busy preparing a new program for the final performances of the year. The main focus of the lessons and rehearsals has been on strengthening students' technical and ensemble skills. Students have been working on mastering exercises and musical pieces that feature more advanced bowing and fingering techniques, challenging rhythmic patterns, dynamical changes and interplay between the different sections of the orchestra.

Calendar of orchestra events:

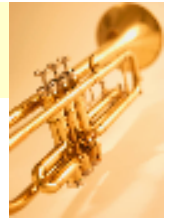
May 15 – field trip to Princeton Symphony educational concert held at Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, NJ (permission slips are due on April 20)

May 24 – 3rd grade instrument demonstration for students/string ensemble performance for students

June 5 – evening concert at MHS

(continue to page 4 for Band info)

Fourth Grade Concerts at MHS! (continued)



VES Band Highlights:

The 4th grade band students have been working hard to prepare for the spring concerts. They continue to improve their music reading skills and music fundamentals. The children have learned how to play 4 major scales and the chromatic scale. This knowledge allows them to play songs in several different keys. They have become more comfortable reading and playing simple quarter note and eighth note rhythms and have begun branching out into more complex rhythms such as triplets, dotted rhythms, basic syncopation, and sixteenth notes for percussionists.

The children will be performing full band arrangements for the spring concerts just as they did in March. For the upcoming concerts, the parts are even more independent than before, requiring stronger counting, watching, and listening skills. Because of the children's increased skill level, they are now able to play more challenging and interesting music. In addition to being able to play more complex music, the children have become more comfortable with the technical aspects of playing their instruments and are beginning to be able to focus less on technique and more on making music. We have been working towards playing with better tone quality and on blending and balancing sounds within the group. We have been working on performing with greater dynamic contrasts (louds and softs) and with more artistic phrasing. I am very proud of the all of the children's accomplishments this year and hope that they will continue to develop their musicality next year and beyond.



PTA Corner

The MES PTA held its annual Parents Night Out fundraiser on April 21st at Cherry Valley Country Club. In addition to dinner, we had a wine and beer tasting, wine arbor and silent auction. The funds raised will directly support our MES PTA technology fund and a goal of providing all of our classrooms at VES with ELMO document cameras. The evening was a success as we raised over \$10,000 toward that goal. Many thanks to our chairs for the event, Patty Edelstein and Adrienne Jakubowski and the rest of the committee for their hard work.

Christine Petrane and Christine Zoffinger-Guidette - PTA Co-Presidents

The Teacher Grant Committee is thrilled to highlight the following grants that have been approved for the teachers and staff at VES. We would like to thank the teachers and staff for their insightful view to improve the quality of children's learning and enhancements toward their educations.

- Camera for the physical education team to create special event slideshows and newsletters .
- Technology (headphone splitters for reading online texts together for Ms. Truscinski and Ms. Gugliotta.
- Classroom Economy Resources to support Mrs. Pignataro's lessons on earning, saving and budgeting for every day expenses.
- Measuring Up Across the Math Curriculum to strengthen measuring, building, comparing and fact fluency and Time Lies When Learning is Fun to develop stronger understanding in telling and measuring time. Math and Science Supervisor, Mr. Meurer will ensure that these support learning in all 3rd and 4th grade classes.
- Spanish *Guess Who* Games for Senoras Goris and Disch to build Spanish vocabulary and reinforce themes in fun ways.
- McCarter Theater's production of Sunjata Kamalenya or the Odyssey Experience for all VES students to teacher cultural awareness and comprehension and listening skills.
- Understanding Gender Differences in Learning workshop for all staff and parents.

These grants total approximately \$10,000 raised from PTA fundraisers and we are proud to support our teachers and staff! Thank you to our community for your donations and support and our teachers for their foresight and dedication!

The Teacher Grant Committee—Denise Buccelata, Christine Zoffinger-Guidette, Christine Petrane, Josephine Turner, and Christine Ark

Village Elementary School
Home of Blazer the Bluebird



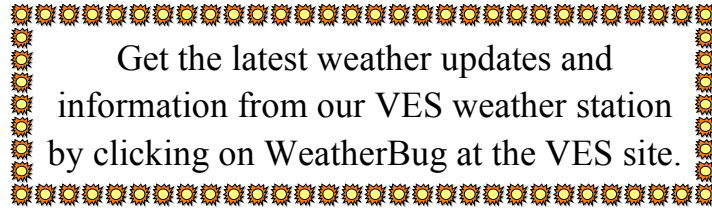
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MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission as a forward-thinking community is to ensure that students grow into confident, compassionate, and successful learners in a global society by providing engaging and challenging educational experiences in a student-centered environment.



Get the latest weather updates and information from our VES weather station by clicking on WeatherBug at the VES site.



From the Health Office: — *MRS. MCGUIRK AND MRS. WOODARD*

If your child has Asthma and or a Life-threatening allergy, we encourage you to begin thinking about next school year. Please make your doctors' appointments early so that all necessary medical forms and medications will be ready come September. During the last few weeks of school we will be sending home the forms for your child's Asthma Treatment Plan and/or Allergy Action Plan. You can also download these forms from the VES Health Office website. In April, students with life-threatening allergies also received a questionnaire via backpack mail. If you have not returned this questionnaire please do so as soon as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation, VES Nurses

School Attire



With the advent of warm weather, we wanted to ask you to help us ensure that your children wear clothing that is appropriate, comfortable and safe for school. Regarding footwear, we want to reiterate that students may not wear shoes with wheels in them. "Wheelies" may be worn to school only if the wheel has been removed and left at home. We discourage students from wearing flip flops or any footwear without adequate foot support or protection. Children are more susceptible to foot or ankle injury at lunch or during recess when wearing this type of shoe. Sneakers are still required on PE days. Shorts that are very short, tank tops and other clothing that is less practical for play are also discouraged. We appreciate your help in providing a safe and comfortable environment for our VES students.



Support the *Princeton Marathon for Kids* and the Pediatric Clinic at Princeton Hospital while also joining First Lady, Michelle Obama and Governor Chris Christie in fighting childhood obesity.

Visit princetonkidsmarathon.org for more information and to register by **May 18th**. Students will get credit for each half hour of activity including gym class. The marathon concludes after with a 1.2 mile run on **June 10th** at the Princeton University Stadium.

Feel free to contact the PE team at OHES or VES should you have questions.

MHS' Class of 2014 is hosting

The Harlem Wizards

May 12, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

MHS Gym

\$10 (\$15 at door)



Tickets available at the MHS main office.

YWCA After School Program at VES



The YWCA of Princeton provides childcare before and after school for children who attend VES. The YWCA tailors its hours to accommodate working families, and offers children diverse and enriching activities in a safe and nurturing environment. Registration packets will be available in the main office. For more information, you may visit our website at: www.ywcaprinceton.org or call the YWCA After School Program Office at: 609-497-2100 X327. Please clearly state your name, your child's name, and a phone number where we can return your phone call.